

Week Ending Friday, January 6, 1995

The President's Radio Address

December 31, 1994

Good morning. The celebration of the New Year is an occasion for optimism and hope; it's full of dreams for the years ahead. At the same time, it's important that we take last year's lessons with us into the future, which is exactly why we make New Year's resolutions. They're an avowal to work even harder in the coming year to be the best we can be.

New Year's is also a very good time to think about what we want for America, as well as for our own families in the year ahead, and about what each of us can do to make our great Nation the best that it can be.

My New Year's resolution to all of you is simple: I'm going to keep doing the work we have begun to help Americans compete and win in the new global economy and to restore the American dream for middle class families.

First and foremost, we should do nothing to jeopardize the economic recovery we have helped to create over the last 2 years. Our deficit reduction plan has already cut our deficit by \$700 billion. That's over \$10,000 of debt for every American family. The economic strategy we have pursued, reducing the deficit, expanding trade, investing in the education and training of our people in the technologies of the future, this strategy has helped to produce over 5 million new jobs in the last 2 years and, in 1994, more high-wage jobs than in the previous 5 years combined.

We're cutting the Federal bureaucracy by over 272,000 people to its smallest size in 30 years. And with these cuts in Government, we've used the savings to invest in the American people, to expand Head Start, to make college loans more affordable to 20 million Americans, and already giving a tax cut to over 15 million working families with incomes under \$27,000 a year.

But last year made it very clear that all the good statistics in the world don't necessarily mean more money in the pockets of working Americans or more security and peace of mind for them. Most Americans haven't had a pay increase in this recovery. Most Americans are working longer work weeks than they were 10 years ago. Over a million Americans in working families lost their health insurance in 1994. And as other costs go up, disposable income and job security go down. So the average American is simply not receiving enough benefit from this robust economic recovery. And we have to keep working until we change that.

Two weeks ago, I proposed a middle class bill of rights, four new ideas to help middle class Americans build a future that lives up to their dreams.

First, to help Americans get the skills and education they need to get and keep high-paying jobs, I proposed that college tuition, community college costs, costs for graduate school, professional school, vocational education, or worker training be fully deductible from your taxable income, phased up to \$10,000 a year if your family makes less than \$120,000 a year. Second, to better support working families raising children, if your family makes \$75,000 a year or less, I propose a tax cut phased up to \$500 for every child under 13. Third, if your family makes less than \$100,000 a year, I propose allowing you to put \$2,000 a year tax-free into an Individual Retirement Account, but also to enable you to withdraw the money tax-free for education, for buying a first home, for paying for health care expenses, or for the care of an elderly parent. Finally, I want to take the billions of dollars that Government now spends on job-training programs of all kinds and make that money directly available to working Americans, to spend as you decide when you need to learn new skills to get a new job or a better job.

As we do this, we must not go back to the irresponsible practices of the past, back to trickle-down economics and exploding the deficit. Every single penny of the middle class bill of rights that I propose is paid for by dramatic cuts in the Government, which I have proposed. An important part of my New Year's resolution is this: I won't allow anyone to destroy the progress we have made in reducing the deficit.

On this New Year's Eve, I want to welcome the new Congress. I ask them to put aside partisan differences, as I pledge to do, and join me in a New Year's resolution to do everything we can to help Americans prosper; to reduce yesterday's Government but help Government stay on the side of American families; to give the middle class tax relief but to do it responsibly, without exploding the deficit; to keep investing in education and job training; and to make our tax relief targeted toward the future, toward raising children, educating and training people, toward the things which make America great.

I want to close by asking all of you to join me as well. Nothing we do here will succeed unless each of you takes a personal responsibility first to develop your own capacity and those of your family members and then to rekindle a sense of community and common purpose in America. We are not enemies in this country. We are all in this together. We are going up or down together. With all of our diversity and differences, unless we work together, we can never make America the best it can be. So let's all make a New Year's resolution to face the future challenges together so that we can realize together the opportunities that lie ahead.

Tomorrow, as you visit with your friends and your family, I hope you'll talk about the ideas in the middle class bill of rights. In the coming weeks, when you're back at work or when you're on the phone with friends, I hope you'll talk about the future and about the future you want for your families and your country. And I hope you'll do a lot of listening to each other and arguing with each other, but don't forget for a moment that we have more in common than what divides us. This is the great source of our abiding strength.

Hillary and I wish you and your family a very happy New Year. Please be careful tonight, and thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:55 a.m. on December 28 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on December 31.

Statement on the Cessation of Hostilities in Bosnia

December 31, 1994

I welcome the agreement of the parties for a 4-month cessation of hostilities in Bosnia.

We hope it will be respected fully and pave the way for a negotiated settlement that brings peace to all the long-suffering people of Bosnia.

We applaud the flexibility that the parties have shown and commend the United Nations and former President Carter for their efforts.

We will be working with our Contact Group partners, the United Nations, and the parties in a renewed effort to seize this opportunity for peace.

Remarks on Arrival in Little Rock, Arkansas

January 2, 1995

Hello. I want to thank you so much for coming out to see us. It's wonderful to be home. We're looking forward just to spending some personal time visiting with our friends, saying hello to people, driving around the State a little bit. And I'm even going to have a few hours tomorrow where I have nothing on the schedule, for the first time in years and years, to go off—

[*At this point, the President's microphone failed.*]

So what, I didn't want to give a speech anyway. Hello. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:13 p.m. at Adams Field. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.